

1.0 INTRODUCTION

After the record-breaking wildfire season of 2000, Congress approved funds for federal and state agencies and local communities to develop and implement a national strategy for preventing the loss of life, natural resources, private property and livelihoods. The result of that planning and preparation is commonly known as the “National Fire Plan” (NFP) (U.S. Department of Agriculture [USDA] 2002). This plan was approved in September 2000 and is fully titled *Managing the Impacts of Wildfire on Communities and the Environment: A Report to the President in Response to the Wildfires of 2000*. The NFP includes five key points: firefighting preparedness, rehabilitation and restoration of burned areas, reduction of hazardous fuels, community assistance, and accountability. In 2001, Congress released another directive requiring the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior to engage Governors in the development of a National ten-year comprehensive strategy that would implement the NFP. For this effort, the *Idaho Statewide Implementation Strategy for the National Fire Plan* (Kempthorne et al. 2002) was developed. It was approved in May 2002 and involved cooperation and collaboration of the Secretary of Interior, Secretary of Agriculture, the Governors of Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, and Oregon, and the Director of the Council on Environmental Quality. The primary goals of the Idaho Plan are to improve prevention and suppression of wildfire, reduce hazardous fuels, restore fire-adapted ecosystems, and promote community assistance.

2.0 PURPOSE AND GOAL

The purpose of this mitigation plan is to identify and mitigate wildfire risks and negative consequences in communities and Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas within Oneida County, Idaho. For the purpose of this plan a WUI is defined as “the geographical area where structures (subdivisions and additions) and other human development meets or intermingles with wildland or vegetative fuels”. The mitigation plan addresses Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) criteria contained in 44 CFR Part 201.6 and follows guidance from the *Idaho Statewide Implementation Strategy for the National Fire Plan* (Kempthorne et al. 2002). It accomplishes this by:

- Identifying fire hazards that affect Oneida County and its residents.
- Providing sufficient information to make mitigation decisions.
- Discussing existing resources that are most current and the best available.
- Describing the process used to develop the plan: how it was prepared, who was involved in the process, and how the public was involved.
- Maintaining the plan: how it will be monitored, evaluated, and updated annually within a five-year cycle.

The plan will be maintained by a group of Oneida County residents or Wildland Fire Interagency Group (Table 1). The group will be represented by agencies countywide with wildland fire suppression experience and responsibilities. County Commissioners will take the lead for monitoring the plan while the other group members evaluate the risks and vulnerabilities to wildland fire within their area of concern. The maintenance process will allow local governments, when appropriate, to incorporate the requirements of the plan into other planning mechanisms such as comprehensive or capital improvement plans which will include public participation through scheduled hearings and meetings.

The overall goal of this plan is to reduce the frequency of wildfires spreading from city or private property to public lands and from spreading from public lands to municipal property. Fire fighter safety will always come first. This goal will be achieved by reducing fuels in high risk areas and conducting public education and the training programs throughout the county.

Table 1. Oneida County Wildland Fire Interagency Group.

Name	Agency
Jerry D. Bush	Chairman, Oneida County Commissioners
Gerald K. Goodenough	Oneida County Commissioner
Gene Caldwell	Oneida County Commissioner
Ceylon Reeder	Oneida County Emergency Services
LaMont Thomas	District Chief, Oneida Fire District (OFD)
Brad Hess	Fire Chief, Malad City Fire Department
Steve Hess	Secretary, Holbrook Fire Department
Tim Keller	Fire Chief, Holbrook Fire Department
Jeff Hill	U.S. Forest Service, Caribou-Targhee National Forest
Kevin Conran	USRD, Bureau of Land Management
Don Gosswiller	USRD, Bureau of Land Management
Sarah Heidi	USRD, Pocatello Field Office, Bureau of Land Management